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Title: Regarding protection of Charminar, a national monument from construction of temporary structures.

SHRI ABDUL RAHMAN (VELLORE): Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring a very important and a sensitive matter to the attention of the Government of India. The historical and archaeological national monument, Four Minarets, which is 420 year old in Hyderabad is facing unforeseen threat and great challenge for the continuation of its existence at this moment.

This 56 metre tall Hyderabad's rich heritage is under the control of Archaeological Survey of India. The ASI is held responsible to protect and manage all historical and national monuments since 1951. This monument has been seen without any kind of alteration or any change till 1960. After 1960, a small structure has been created in one of the corners of the Four Minarets. As per *The Hindu* newspaper photograph revealed in the month of November 2012 – the photograph was taken in 1962 – that a structure was created in one corner as shown in the picture.

From that time onwards, a small structure has been altered from time to time. Now it is looking a nearly 20 metre high structure, which is now called a temple. We are not against any place of worship - any temple, any church or any mosque or whatever it may be.

Our duty is to respect all religious ritual places. No religion is preaching against any other religion. All religions are preaching morality. All religions are preaching to respect the sentiments of other religions. So, we are not against any temple or any other place of worship. My simple point is that the ASI is having the full responsibility to protect any national monument and no building is allowed to be constructed within 100 metres from a national monument, according to the rule of law. My simple question is how ASI authorities have allowed to erect a structure, whatever it may be, whether it is a worshipping place or not. How have they allowed to create or to make this kind of a structure? Even after it is made, at least proper and relevant steps were supposed to be taken by them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a well-known ASI stipulation prohibits building of any kind of structure, as I already told you, within 100 metres of a national monument, but this temple seems to have slipped through such a stricture, no doubt, by the apathy and negligence of the authorities.

By taking this opportunity, I would like to request the Government of India to take necessary and needful action to protect and keep this national monument, Four Minarets, as it originally was existing without any kind of alteration and without any kind of additions.

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID (THENI): Sir, I associate with him.